

The Fellowship Focus

Monthly Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Elkhart January 2024



WELCOME TO UUFE

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Elkhart is a welcoming community encouraging religious freedom, nurturing individual spiritual and ethical growth, celebrating diversity, and promoting a just and sustainable world.

– Board of Trustees

This newsletter is edited for you by Katrina Konopinski. Send submissions, suggestions, and comments for future editions to katksirx@gmail.com

Sundays at UUFE

1st Sunday, 1/7/24, 10 am: Dwight Fish, "Now and Then"

We don't have any other information than a title, but you can be sure that Dwight will speak about something! Afterwards, coffee, tea, and refreshments will be in the Gathering Place, and our Meditation program will be at 11:45.

2nd Sunday, 1/14/24, 10 am: Arvis Dawson, Elkhart City Councilman and Council President, will speak on civil rights and Martin Luther King Jr. Afterwards, coffee, tea, and refreshments will be in the Gathering Place, and our Meditation program will be at 11:45.

3rd Sunday, 1/21/24, 10 am: Kyle Schlabach, "Doubt"

AMBS student and Goshen College instructor Kyle Schlabach will speak to us about doubt and our pursuit of physical evidence of the mysterious—and about the use of the arts to probe deeper into that truth. We will share Joys and Sorrows, and afterward the service our monthly potluck in the Gathering Place.

4th Sunday, 1/28/24, 10 am: Rev. Dr. Jimmy Clifton returns to the pulpit

We don't have a sermon title yet, but we're glad he's feeling well and ready to speak. We will have 4th Sunday candle sharing, and afterwards, coffee, tea, and refreshments will be in the Gathering Place, and our Meditation program will be at 11:45.

1st Sunday, 2/4/24, 10 am: Pastor Mariah Martin, topic TBD

Pastor Mariah Martin will return with a message for the first Sunday in February. Afterwards, coffee, tea, and refreshments will be in the Gathering Place, and our Meditation program will be at 11:45.



Worship and Arts

"Wow! Two wonderful holiday services on Dec. 17th and Dec. 24th! Thanks to the Religious Education (RE) program's children, Renee Ruocco, and all the RE volunteers for their wonderful contributions for our delightful Yule service. Also thanks to the reader's theatre participants, musicians, tech volunteers, and bakers & cleaner-uppers for their contributions for our special Christmas Eve evening service. It was a special "live" service for Christmas Eve that we hadn't had for 4 years.

After our Dec. 31 Coffin and Cradle service, we look ahead to 2024 with fresh ideas and planning. We will have some of our traditional services and returning guest ministers. However, we're looking at new outside speakers as possibilities or already planned.

As 2024 progresses, we'd love to have another volunteer or two step up to join the Worship Committee. We have a strong process and checklist for organizing and coordinating a service, and lots of experienced members to assist newbies. Let one of our committee (Joan Clayborn, Laura Snow, Lorna Lane, Geneele Crump, Steve Cripe, or Chuck Bower) know if you're interested.

Chuck Bower, Worship Committee Chair

Meditation

The meditation group will meet at 11:45 am in the RE classroom on January 7, January 14, and 28. Since we have a potluck on January 21, we will take the day off so we can all enjoy the meal together. We generally discuss our meditation practices followed by a guided meditation. The sessions usually last about an hour. There is no charge for this program, and all are welcome.



Science And Society

We will suspend the Science and Society programs for January. Currently we anticipate starting them back up in February but will make that decision during January. If anyone would like to start an alternative program, such as a forum discussion or other program, please contact Ken Clayborn.

Community Euchre

Join people from the community and our Fellowship for relaxing fun and warm fellowship. We play round robin games and get to know each other. All euchre fans and “wannabes” are invited to join the fun. If you’re a beginner, no worries, we’ll set you up with other beginners and easygoing veterans. Contact Mary Adams at createnjoy@yahoo.com for more information. Events held monthly on 2nd Saturdays at 4pm, next on January 13.



UU Feasters

Feasters will meet at 11:30am on Wednesday, January 24 at The Vine, 214 S. Main, Elkhart.

Let Mary Adams know that you can come so that she can reserve adequate space for us. Contact her at 619-921-0613 or createnjoy@yahoo.com.

UU Feasters is a social outing for those interested in sharing a monthly luncheon together. Please consider coming and having a wonderful social time with others from our Fellowship.

Upcoming destinations:

Feb. 28 - DaVincis, 5102 Cassapolis, Elkhart

Mar. 27 - Brislo, 1500 Osolo Rd., Elkhart



YOGA at UUF

We are pleased to have Kristen Smith-Myers as our yoga teacher. She will be with us on most Thursday evenings beginning at 6pm in the Gathering Place.

From Board President Pam Wycliff

At year's end, UUFE can look at this past year knowing we have done well. Interesting, uplifting, informative Sunday Services, a thriving Religious Education/Exploration group of children and committed teachers, a re-birth of our Social Justice Committee with many activities in progress. Just a few for us to be thankful for this year.

Our Board notes for December:

- Each committee is finishing up their committee descriptions and when these are completed by end of this year, a task force will be reviewing all, formatting them along with updating all the policies to be presented to the Board in February for our office manual.
- The Search Committee is currently updating our UUFE resume as we have now a Religious Educational program for our children and we have totally updated the Learning Center as a place where a minister might be able to stay if wanted.
- We have a new Task Board in the Gathering Place where committees can place small tasks needing done for congregants to select to serve without being on a committee.
- Realizing we have no policy for possible violence events, we are checking with the Elkhart school system for how they handle safety from possible events and will have someone from the Elkhart police department do an assessment of our building for security. After these have been completed, we will write a policy which following guidelines from the UUA.
- It was voted that for the January 7, 2024 Sunday offering which is generally for UUFE Sustainability Fund we will be giving that offering to the BLUU (Black Lives UU).

May we all remain as healthy as possible, joyful in our lives and continue to work toward peace in small and big ways through 2024.

Finance Committee

from Ken Clayborn

1. The committee met to discuss updates to the Finance Committee procedures and job descriptions. There were no major revisions required. The changes recommended will be submitted to Laura Snow, as chair of the Committee of The Whole. She will format them and submit them to the Board Subcommittee for inclusion in the updated policy manual.
2. All payments are current.
3. Summaries of pledges and monetary contributions for the calendar year will be sent to all contributors in early January 2024.

Your News from the UUA and MidAmerica Region

Between conferences, educational resources and worship services, there's plenty to engage in within the wider world of Unitarian Universalism. Here are some highlights.

MidAmerica Regional Assembly set for April 19-20, 2024

MidAmerica Regional Assembly has been confirmed for April 19-20, 2024, at the First Unitarian Society of Madison, Wisconsin. This will be a hybrid event with both in-person and online participation available and will take place in concert with the Pacific Western Regional Assembly. It's particularly exciting because the keynote presentation will be a conversation between the Rev. Sofia Betancourt, the Unitarian Universalist Association's president, and the Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia A. Thompson, president of the United Church of Christ. Expect a rich and challenging schedule of educational programming, networking, and spiritual practices.

[Keep an eye on \[uua.org/midamerica\]\(https://uua.org/midamerica\) for more details.](https://uua.org/midamerica)

Join a monthly UPLIFT program

UPLIFT is offering monthly gatherings to support trans, non-binary, and not-entirely-or-at-all-cis UUs and friends of UUism. They start at 8 p.m. on the fourth Tuesdays of each month through June 2024. [Here's how you can sign up and learn more.](#) Or visit uua.org/lgbtq/transnb.

Welcome 2024 with Black Lives of UU

Celebrate the new year with Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (BLUU). They are planning a live worship service that will be streamed on Zoom at 4 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on Sunday, January 14, 2024. The service originates from the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rockville, Maryland, with the Rev. Mykal Slack preaching. Keep an eye on [BLUU's website, \[www.bluu.org\]\(http://www.bluu.org\)](http://www.bluu.org), for more information, including how to access the Zoom feed.

General Assembly 2024

General Assembly is the annual gathering of Unitarian Universalists, where we conduct business of the Association, explore the theological underpinnings of our faith, and lean fully into our mission and principles.

Please join us online Wednesday, June 20, through Sunday, June 23, 2024, for this four-day immersive experience where we participate in inspirational worship services and informative workshops, reconvene with friends and colleagues, and explore our virtual exhibit hall.

GA is an unforgettable experience for the thousands of UUs who participate. You'll leave with renewed energy and innovative ideas to share with your congregation and community-at-large!

January 2024

Birthdays

sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
	1	2	3 <i>Randy Demerly</i> 5pm Membership	4 <i>Emily Morison</i> 6pm Yoga	5 <i>Sarah Cooke-Gurka</i>	6 <i>Mike Puro</i>
7 <i>Gloria Salavarría</i> <i>Mary Curry</i> 10am Service Coffee Hr 11:45am Meditation	8	9 7pm Worship & Arts	10 6:30pm Board	11 <i>Phyllis Hostetler</i> <i>Carl Rust</i> 6pm Yoga	12	13 4pm Euchre
14 <i>Barb Kindel</i> 10am Service Coffee Hr 11:45am Meditation	15 <i>Chad Crabtree</i>	16	17	18 <i>Hank Skinner</i> <i>Bri Tribbett</i> 6pm Yoga	19	20
21 <i>Phil Campagnoli</i> 10am Service Potluck	22	23	24 11:30am Feasters	25 6pm Yoga FOCUS INFO DUE	26	27
28 10am Service Coffee Hr 11:45am Meditation	29	30 <i>Ken Clayborn</i>	31			

UUFE
1732 Garden St
Elkhart, IN 46514